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HANDBOOK FOR EMPLOYEES

CODE OF ETHICS FOR GOVERNMENT SERVICE

House Concurrent Resolution 175, 2nd Session, 85th Congress.

Any person in Government service should:

1. Put loyalty to the highest moral principles and to country above loyalty to persons, party, or Government department.
2. Uphold the Constitution, laws, and legal regulations of the United States and of all governments therein and never be a party to their evasion.
3. Give a full day's labor for a full day's pay; giving to the performance of his duties his earnest effort and best thought.
4. Seek to find and employ more efficient and economical ways of getting tasks accomplished.
5. Never discriminate unfairly by the dispensing of special favors or privileges to anyone, whether for remuneration or not; and never accept, for himself or his family, favors or benefits under circumstances which might be construed by reasonable persons as influencing the performance of his governmental duties.
6. Make no private promises of any kind binding upon the duties of office, since a Government employee has no private word which can be binding on public duty.
7. Engage in no business with the Government, either directly or indirectly, which is inconsistent with the conscientious performance of his governmental duties.
8. Never use any information coming to him confidentially in the performance of governmental duties as a means for making private profit.
9. Expose corruption wherever discovered.
10. Uphold these principles, ever conscious that public office is a public trust.

WELCOME TO EPA

You have chosen to participate in a vital mission: the drive for a clean and healthy environment. The personal diligence, innovation and cooperation of dedicated employees is necessary for the accomplishment of this mission.

We hope that your work will provide you with many challenges and that your contributions will be many and will bring you personal satisfaction and success in your career in EPA.

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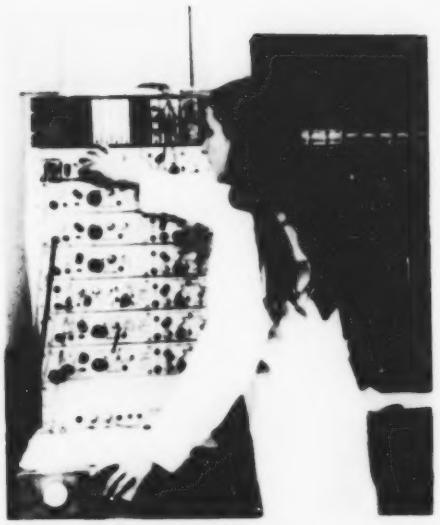
THE EPA MISSION — *Advocate For A Livable Environment*

The Environmental Protection Agency serves as the advocate for a livable environment in a number of ways. EPA is first and foremost a regulatory agency, with responsibility for standard-setting and enforcement. It is also a research body, monitoring and analyzing the environment and conducting scientific studies. The Agency is engaged in a massive effort to restore America's waters, to reduce air pollution, and to find a comprehensive approach to other environmental problems associated with pesticides use, radiation, solid waste disposal, mechanically-generated noise, and toxic substances. The Agency provides technical and scientific information to the public, offers technical and financial assistance for environmental protection efforts at all levels of government, and provides training to develop the skilled environmental capability that the nation needs.



YOUR WORK

You have joined a workforce of much diversity. You may find chemists, typists, sanitary engineers, editors, janitors, biologists, attorneys, aquatic samplers, physical science administrators, mathematicians, computer specialists, and ecologists to name a few. Whatever your occupation, your position is important and necessary and your efforts are essential to the fulfillment of the EPA mission.

Your supervisor has decided what part of the work will be assigned to you, and has developed a position description stating your duties and responsibilities. The position description is not meant to be a complete listing of everything you will be called upon to do, nor is it intended to confine your talents or cramp your initiative. Rather, it indicates the range of your typical assignments, while allowing for other assignments that are not specifically mentioned. You should be given a copy of your position description as you begin your work.

Since work assignments change, position descriptions change. If the change in your work is temporary or minor, no change need be made in your position description. If the change is permanent and significant, your supervisor and your personnel office are responsible for revising your position description to assure its accuracy. You are encouraged to discuss your work assignments with your supervisor if you feel there is some need for attention or clarification. Your personnel office can also give you information and guidance.

PROBATION AND CONDUCT

There is a probationary period if your appointment was made "subject to satisfactory completion of probationary or trial period." Before your appointment, you had to meet certain requirements as part of the examining process. As a final and significant part of the examining process, the probationary period during the first year of employment provides a test of actual performance in a position. Throughout this period, your supervisor will be evaluating your ability to perform in your position and your conduct as a Federal employee. When you satisfactorily finish your probationary period, your appointment is considered complete. During that period, if

your performance is not satisfactory, you may be terminated from your position because of failure to qualify for retention.

While the usual probationary period is one year, it may be possible to count experience you have already had in another Federal position as all or part of your probationary period. Questions on this point should be referred to your personnel office.

To make sure that you are informed of what is expected of you as a Federal employee, you should familiarize yourself with the Code of Ethics for Government Service, which is printed at the beginning of this handbook. Also, you are urged to read the EPA Regulations on Employee Responsibilities and Conduct, furnished by your personnel office. This provides information and guidance on a wide range of matters of concern to you as a Federal employee: outside employment, conflict of interest, political activity, conduct on the job, and others.

YOUR PAY

You will receive your paycheck every other Tuesday. It will cover a two week period ending ten days before payday. This delay allows time for payroll preparation and issuance of the checks. If you should ever lose your pay check, report it to your supervisor or the payroll office immediately, so that payment on it can be stopped and you can be issued another check.

For most EPA positions, rates of pay are established by law through a position classification system and a pay schedule known as the General Schedule (GS). Each position is classified in a GS grade in accordance with Civil Service Commission classification standards on the basis of duties and responsibilities assigned to it and the knowledge and qualifications required to perform the work. Your personnel office can give you a current pay table showing the rate of pay and the salary range for your position.

Some positions (mainly those involving trade, craft, and laboring skills) are not covered by the General Schedule. These are Wage Grade positions, and most of them are covered by the Federal Wage System. Pay for these jobs is set

on the basis of what is paid for the same kind of work in private industry in the same locality. If you are in this type of position, the wage schedule covering your position will be available in your personnel office.

Salary Increases

If your appointment is not temporary with a definite time limit and if you are under the General Schedule, you will earn a salary increase periodically until you reach the top step of your grade, provided that your work meets an acceptable level of competence. You may earn such an increase every year until you reach the fourth step, every two years to the seventh step, and every three years to the tenth step. Increases up to the top step of the grade may also be awarded for work of exceptionally high quality. For advancement to positions of higher grade and thus higher pay, see page 22. If you are in a non-supervisory wage grade position under the Federal Wage System, you may earn an increase to the second step after six months, to the third step after eighteen months of satisfactory service, and to the fourth and fifth steps after 2 years in each of steps three and four. Wage Grade supervisors can also advance to four steps above the entrance level rate.

Deductions

Deductions are made from your pay for the Federal income withholding tax, Social Security or Civil Service Retirement, State income tax in certain States, and, if you wish, life insurance, health benefits, U. S. Savings Bonds, and in some localities, Combined Federal Campaign contributions. Under certain circumstances, you may authorize voluntary allotments for the payment of dues to a union. You may also authorize the payroll office to send all or a portion of your salary directly to a bank or other financial institution. If you are interested, ask your personnel office for more detailed information on permissible allotments. With each pay check you will receive a statement showing how much is deducted for each item. The statement will also indicate cumulative deductions since the first pay period of the year. Each time there is a change in your salary or deductions, it will be reflected in your statement. As you receive these statements, it is your responsibility to verify the accuracy of your earnings and leave statement and to promptly report any errors to your timekeeper.

Federal and State Income Tax

Your personnel office will provide the necessary exemption certificates for your use in reporting the number of your exemptions for income tax purposes. When changes occur, such as a change in marital status or number of dependents, be sure to report them immediately by filling out new exemption certificates and sending them to the payroll office. At the end of the year, you will be given a withholding statement (Form W-2) for use in preparing your income tax return.

Savings Bonds

You may want to save money regularly through automatic purchase of United States Savings Bonds. You can get a form for this purpose from your supervisor or your personnel office. This form will authorize the payroll office to take the money from your salary and buy the bonds for you.

Retirement

Depending on the type of appointment you have, a deduction is made for either Civil Service Retirement or Social Security. Most employees are covered under the Civil Service Retirement System which provides annuities for retired and disabled civil servants as well as survivor benefits if the worker dies. If you come under this system, you will be contributing through payroll deductions to the retirement fund at the rate of 7% of your basic salary, and EPA, as your employer, will contribute an equal amount. If you leave the Government service or transfer to a position under a different Federal retirement system, you can withdraw the money you have paid into the fund. It is usually to your benefit to leave it in the fund if you plan a career in the Federal Government. For more information about the many benefits of the retirement system, read your "Certificate of Membership in the United States Civil Service Retirement System," which your personnel office provides.

If you are not covered under the Civil Service Retirement System, you are covered by Social Security. Your rights under Social Security are the same as if you worked for a private employer. A pamphlet on Social Security is available from your personnel office.

Group Life Insurance

With certain exceptions depending upon the type of your appointment, you are automatically insured under the Federal Employees' Group Life Insurance Plan unless you file a waiver form. This insurance plan provides life, accidental death, and dismemberment insurance, available as regular and optional insurance.

The amount of regular life insurance you may purchase depends on your basic annual pay, not including overtime, night and or hazardous duty (GS employees only), or other extra pay. If your annual pay is $8,000 or less, you are insured for $10,000. If your annual pay is more than $8,000, you are insured for an amount equal to your annual salary rounded to the next higher thousand plus $2,000 up to a maximum of $45,000. Both you and EPA contribute to the cost of regular insurance. Your cost is 27½¢ each biweekly pay period for each $1,000 of regular insurance. For example, if your annual salary is $10,347, your insurance will be $13,000. The cost to you for $13,000 worth of regular insurance will be $3.58 each payday (13 × 27½¢).

If you have regular insurance, you may also elect optional insurance in the amount of $10,000—no more, no less. This $10,000 is in addition to whatever amount of regular insurance you have. The Government does not contribute to the cost of optional insurance. Rates and other information are available in a leaflet on the Federal Employees' Group Life Insurance Program, available at your personnel office. If you waive the regular insurance or decline the optional insurance, you may not change your election for at least one year. At that time you may receive coverage only if you are under age 50 and in good health.

Designating a Beneficiary

The laws regarding Civil Service Retirement, Federal Employees' Group Life Insurance, and any unpaid compensation provide that unless other designations have been made, the benefits due survivors of deceased Federal employees will be paid in this order of precedence: (1) widow or widower; (2) children; (3) parents; (4) executor or administrator of the estate; (5) next of kin according to the laws of the State in which the employee was domiciled. If this order of precedence

is not satisfactory or if you wish to name some other person or persons, you should get the proper forms for this purpose from your personnel office.

It is important to note that if you have transferred to EPA from another Federal Department or Agency where you had previously designated beneficiaries for these benefits, it is necessary to again complete the proper forms to redesignate beneficiaries for insurance benefits and unpaid compensation.

Federal Employees' Health Benefits Program

Several voluntary health benefits plans are available to Federal employees for protection against cost of accident and illness. Employees serving under a permanent-type appointment are eligible to enroll in one of the plans. There are no medical examinations, no waiting periods, and no restrictions because of age or physical condition. Your premium depends on the plan you join. EPA contributes toward the cost of your plan, and you pay for your share of the cost through payroll deductions. You may choose either individual or family coverage, high or low option. More information is available from your personnel office.

WORKING HOURS AND PREMIUM PAY

Unless otherwise indicated, the work week is 40 hours—8 hours a day and 5 days a week.

Holidays

The legal holidays are: New Year's Day, January 1; Washington's Birthday, the third Monday in February; Memorial Day, the last Monday in May; Independence Day, July 4; Labor Day, the first Monday in September; Columbus Day, the second Monday in October; Veterans Day, the fourth Monday in October; Thanksgiving Day, the fourth Thursday in November; and Christmas Day, December 25, and any other day designated as a holiday by the President. For employees whose workweek is Monday through Friday, holidays falling on Saturdays are observed on the preceding Friday, and those falling on Sunday are observed the following Monday. For other employees, if one of the holidays falls on a regular non-work day, another day will be designated as a holiday. In all cases, if a day off cannot be given for the holiday, holiday pay applies.

Holiday Pay If you are assigned to duty which is not overtime work on a holiday, you will be paid twice your regular rate of basic pay up to eight hours of duty. If you are assigned overtime work on a holiday, you will be paid as for overtime work performed on other days.

Overtime You may now and then be called upon to work overtime. General Schedule employees (GS) who receive a basic pay rate that does not exceed the minimum rate for Grade GS-10 are paid one and one-half times the basic hourly rate for authorized overtime in excess of 8 hours in a day or 40 hours in a week, whichever is the greater number of overtime hours, unless they request compensatory time off instead of pay. A request for compensatory time off must be made before the end of the pay period in which the overtime occurred. The overtime rate for General Schedule employees whose basic pay rate exceeds the minimum rate for grade GS-10 is one and one-half times the minimum GS-10 rate. Employees whose rate of basic pay exceeds the maximum rate for grade GS-10 may be given compensatory time off instead of overtime pay. Compensatory time off should be taken within six months after the pay period in which it is worked. If you are a wage grade employee, you will be paid one and one-half times your basic hourly rate for authorized overtime in excess of 8 hours a day or 40 hours a week, whichever is more.

Regular Night Work If you are assigned to work on a regular shift which requires work between the hours of 6 at night and 6 in the morning, you will be paid the regular night rate of pay for work during these hours. General Schedule employees receive 10% above the day rate of pay. Wage rate employees receive a shift differential of 7½ percent of the rate for regularly scheduled nonovertime work when a majority of the hours occur between 3:00 p.m. and midnight; and 10 percent for regularly scheduled nonovertime work when a majority of the hours occur between 11 p.m. and 8:00 a.m

Regular Sunday Work

Full-time employees who work on Sunday as part of their regularly scheduled tour of duty will receive their basic pay plus 25% for each 8 hours of a regularly scheduled tour when any part of the shift falls on Sunday.

YOUR LEAVE

In the Federal civilian service, approved time off is called "leave." Every absence from duty must be accounted for by annual, sick, compensatory, military, court, or funeral leave (or other less common type of leave), or by leave without pay, unless the absence is officially excused for such reasons as: voting or registration to vote; blood donations; civil defense activities; taking an examination for your position; registration for the draft and physical examinations for military duty.

Annual Leave

The rate at which you earn annual leave depends upon the length of your Government service, counting civilian service and certain military service. If you have less than 3 years of service, you earn 13 days of annual leave per year. Employees with 3 but less than 15 years of service earn 20 days per year; those with 15 or more years of service earn 26 days per year. If you are new in the Federal service or have had a break in service, you cannot use any annual leave until you complete 90 calendar days of employment. Thereafter, the leave earned during this 90 day period is available for your use. If you are a temporary employee with an appointment of less than 90 days, you earn no annual leave. If you are a part-time employee with a regular tour of duty, you earn leave on a prorated basis, depending upon your length of Federal service. An intermittent employee with no regular tour of duty earns no leave.

You may use your annual leave when you have it to your credit and have your supervisor's approval in advance. He will approve your request if work conditions permit. You are encouraged to use part of your annual leave for vacation every year. You may also use your annual leave to take care of your personal business. You may request leave orally or in writing by completing SF-71-109, Application for Leave.

You can accumulate annual leave up to a maximum of 240 hours. Annual leave above this maximum must be used during the leave year in which it is earned, or it is lost. The statement you receive with each pay check will tell you the

amount of leave you have earned, the amount you have used thus far during the year, and the amount you must use or lose.

Leave is charged in 1-hour units. An absence of less than an hour may be counted as a whole hour, or, at the supervisor's discretion, it may be excused without charge. Your supervisor's decision will depend on the circumstances and on your leave record.

If you leave the Federal service with at least 90 days of current continuous service, you will be paid a lump sum for your annual leave balance up to your maximum allowable accumulation. If you transfer from EPA to another Federal Agency, your leave will go with you to the other agency, but you would be wise to check with your new agency to be sure that your leave was transferred.

Advanced annual leave may be granted, but it is limited to what you will earn in the current year or, in the case of temporary employees, to what will be earned during the period of appointment. If leave is advanced to you and you leave the service before earning the full amount of the advance, you will have to refund the cash value of the leave balance you still owe, unless separation is by death or for disability.

Sick Leave

You are credited with 4 hours of sick leave each pay period. There is no limit on the amount of sick leave you may accumulate. Sick leave can be used (1) when you are unable to work because of illness, injury, or pregnancy; (2) when, because you have been exposed to a contagious disease for which local health authorities require quarantine, isolation, or limitation of movement, you would endanger the health of others if you were at work; (3) when a member of your family has a contagious disease and you have to care for him; or (4) when you have an appointment for medical, dental, or optical examination or treatment.

Sick leave is also charged in units of 1 hour. If you have to be absent because of illness or injury, let your supervisor know as soon as possible. When you return to work, you may initial your time and attendance card certifying your absence on sick leave or complete an application for leave, SF-71-109.

Your supervisor cannot grant the sick leave unless he is convinced that your absence was in fact for a reason for which sick leave is provided by law. For this purpose he may require you to submit a medical certificate. For absences of more than 3 days he must require either a medical certificate or other acceptable evidence of illness or disability. He must also require a medical certificate if you are granted advance sick leave or are absent under circumstances which raise reasonable doubt about your inability to work. It is EPA policy to require a medical certificate even for short absences when employees have been using sick leave repeatedly or have been frequently absent on days just before or after a nonwork day or just after a payday.

When you plan to be absent for medical, dental, or optical examination or treatment, get your supervisor's approval in advance. If you have a health problem that makes it necessary for you to use a lot of sick leave or to take frequent short periods of sick leave, talk it over with your supervisor. You might also talk it over with the nurse or doctor in the employee health unit. It is EPA policy to make every effort to help employees with health problems and to grant necessary sick leave in accordance with law and regulations.

If you become seriously ill or disabled and do not have enough sick leave, up to 30 days of sick leave may be advanced to you. This advance is made up when you return to work. Until it is made up, you cannot use the sick leave you currently earn. In unusual circumstances you can be advanced additional sick leave, provided the total advance at no time exceeds 30 days. If you leave the Federal Service while still indebted for sick leave, you will have to refund the cash value of the advanced leave.

Maternity Leave

Maternity leave is leave granted because of pregnancy and confinement. The absence is chargeable to sick or any combination of sick, annual, and leave without pay. Generally 14 weeks of maternity leave will be granted (six weeks before and eight weeks after expected delivery date) although this may vary depending upon circumstances in each case. The personnel office will answer any questions on maternity leave that you may have.

Leave Without Pay (LWOP)

Leave without pay may be authorized if you request it and your supervisor approves your request. It may be granted at your request for an emergency during your first 90 days of appointment and for absences thereafter if your annual leave is depleted. It may be granted for absence due to illness when your sick and annual leave are depleted or for educational and other purposes which are determined to be of mutual benefit to you and the Government. Thirty calendar days is the usual limit on the amount of LWOP you can take at one time. More may be granted if you intend to return to duty and your extended absence is desirable for improvement in your health or job abilities. When you apply for LWOP, use the Application for Leave, Form SF-71-109, stating your reasons and, if leave is necessitated by illness, obtain the certification of your physician on the form or submit a separate statement.

Effect of LWOP on Your Rights and Privileges

Leave without pay does not affect your tenure; you are simply on approved leave in your position. However, it has several side effects. If you take LWOP before completing probation, any amount over 22 workdays will extend your probationary period. LWOP in excess of 6 months in any calendar year is not counted as service for retirement purposes. For each 80 hours of LWOP, your normal earnings of sick and annual leave are reduced by the amount you earn in one pay period.

For GS employees leave without pay in excess of 2 workweeks may not be counted toward service required for within-grade increases to salary steps 2, 3, and 4; LWOP in excess of 4 workweeks may not be counted toward service required for within-grade increases to salary steps 5, 6, and 7; LWOP in excess of 6 workweeks may not be counted toward service required for within-grade increases to salary steps 8, 9, and 10. There are similar limitations on the creditability of leave without pay as service for within-grade increases for wage grade employees. Your Government Life Insurance covers you while you are on continuous LWOP up to 12 months. Your Federal Employees' Health Benefits Plan covers you while you are on continuous LWOP up to 365 days, except for absence for military duty exceeding 30 days and reduction in force furloughs.

If LWOP has been approved through a date which is a legal holiday, you are not paid for the holiday even if you come back to work the day after the holiday.

Funeral Leave

You may be granted leave by your supervisor to arrange or attend the memorial service or funeral of an immediate relative who died from wounds, disease, or injury incurred as a member of the Armed Forces while serving in a combat zone. Such leave as needed may be granted but not for more than 3 workdays.

Military Leave

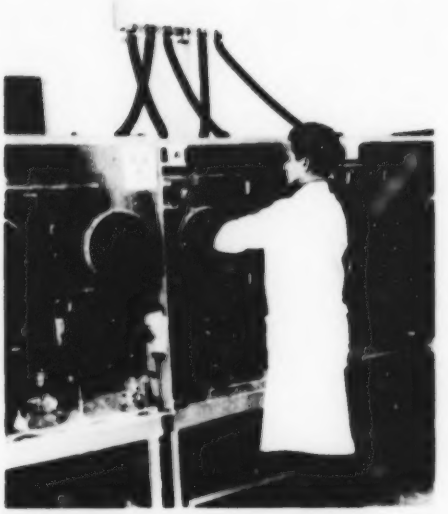
Permanent or indefinite full-time employees who are reservists in the Army, Navy, Marine Corps, Air Force, or Coast Guard, or are members of the Air or Army National Guard are entitled to a maximum of 15 calendar days of military leave each calendar year when ordered to active duty for training. Official orders must be presented in arranging for military leave. There is no deduction from civilian pay for military pay earned during the regular 15 days of military leave for training purposes.

Additional military leave of 22 workdays in a calendar year may be authorized for calls to duty to provide military aid to enforce the law. Military pay earned on workdays will be deducted from civilian pay. Military pay earned on nonworkdays will be retained by the employee.

Members of the National Guard of the District of Columbia are granted military leave for all the days they are ordered to duty for parade or encampment.

Court Leave

Court leave is authorized absence from official duty for certain attendance at court without charge to annual leave or loss of pay. It is granted for jury duty with a State, municipal, Federal, or District of Columbia court. It is also granted for service as a witness on behalf of a State or local Government. You are not entitled to court leave if you volunteer as a witness; neither is court leave granted if the service is on behalf of a private party. All employees with regular tours of duty are eligible for court leave.



When asking your supervisor for court leave, show him your court order, subpoena, or summons. When you return to work, submit written evidence (such as a marshal's statement) that you served as witness or juror. The evidence should show the date and if possible the hours when you served. Ask your supervisor or personnel office about the crediting of jury or witness fees and other court compensation and expenses.

Excused Absence

Voting and Registration: If you want to vote or register in any election or referendum, you may be excused for a reasonable time, as follows: (1) Where the polls are not open at least 3 hours either before or after your regular working hours, you may report to work up to 3 hours after polls open, or leave work up to 3 hours before they close, whichever requires less absence; (2) Under exceptional circumstances where the usual amount of excused absence would not give you enough time to vote, your supervisor may excuse you for more time, but not over one day; (3) If you vote outside the commuting area in which you work and absentee balloting is not permitted, you may be allowed enough time to make the trip, and any time off in excess of one day must be charged to leave; (4) You will be given time to register on the same basis as time to vote, unless you could register on a nonworkday and make the round trip to do so within a reasonable day's journey.

Blood Donations: The amount of time required to travel to and from a blood center and to actually give blood will be excused. Additional excused time may be granted on the same day for recovery and rest if necessary.

Registration for the Draft: An absence will be excused for a period sufficient for travel and registration for the draft up to one workday. If additional time is required, it will be charged to annual leave or leave without pay.

Taking Examinations: If you are required to take Civil Service or agency examinations for your present position or to qualify for another position within the Agency, your absence will be excused.

Physical Examination for Military Duty: An employee ordered to report for physical examination in connection with entry

into armed services will be excused for such time as is required for the examination when his request is accompanied by official notice from proper authority. Absence extending beyond one workday must be supported also by a statement from the examining station. If he is ordered to report to other than the nearest examining station by his own choice and the absence extends beyond one workday, the excess absence will be charged to annual leave or LWOP. Absence for periodic examination of reserve and retired members of the armed forces must be charged to leave.

Civil Defense Activity: Any full-time employee who has volunteered and is selected for an assignment with a Federally-recognized State or local defense program and is designated as available by the leave approving official, may be authorized to participate in pre-emergency programs and test exercises for not more than 40 hours in a calendar year.

YOUR SAFETY AND HEALTH

Accidents cause great suffering and financial loss each year. These consequences can be prevented if every employee accepts his responsibility for preventing accidents. In EPA, the safety program is aimed at accident prevention and consists generally of the promotion of "safety-consciousness" among employees through training and education. This program includes participation in fire drills, enforcement of safety instructions, immediate reporting and investigation of accidents, prompt analysis of accidents, corrective action to prevent recurrence, inspections for physical hazards in offices, elimination of such hazards when discovered, and specific rules for handling materials and using equipment.

Safety on the job is everyone's business, including yours. You can help by:

1. Using good judgment and common sense in working safely at all times;
2. Reporting immediately to your supervisor all unsafe practices and hazards in work areas;
3. Recommending to your supervisor procedures or practices to eliminate hazards on the job;
4. Making general accident control or safety recommendations to appropriate safety officials.

5. Familiarizing yourself with prescribed procedures and safeguards before entering into any potentially hazardous operation.

When accidents do happen, you should do two things immediately:

1. Get first-aid treatment even if the injury is slight and adequate medical attention for serious injuries as soon as possible;

2. Report the injury to your supervisor and complete necessary forms.

There is a health room with a nurse on duty available at most EPA facilities. In addition to emergency care for injuries or illness occurring at work certain immunization programs and screening tests may be available. Health examinations are given at a number of locations. If you want to talk about a health problem or obtain information on medical facilities, see the health room nurse.

Compensation for Injury

The Office of Federal Employees' Compensation in the Department of Labor provides compensation and medical care for employees for disability due to personal injury sustained while in the performance of duty or to disease proximately caused by their employment. In addition, other benefits are provided for dependents if the injury or disease causes death. In establishing eligibility for these benefits, it is essential to promptly report accidents and injuries on Form CA-1 & 2, Employee's Notice of Injury or Occupational Disease. This form is available from your supervisor or the nurse in the health room. The pamphlet, "When Injured at Work," gives you more information about benefits under the Federal Employees' Compensation Act and tells you how to apply for them. Copies of this pamphlet are available from your personnel office.

YOUR RIGHTS AND PRIVILEGES

When you come to work for the Environmental Protection Agency, along with your basic rights as an American citizen, you have the benefit of Federal policy and law which forbid discrimination because of race, color, religion, national origin,

sex, or physical handicap. You are free to join or not join a union; to vote as you choose; to express your opinion on political questions.

The employment rules of the Government protect as far as possible the job security of the competent worker, but if work or conduct is unsatisfactory, removal from the position is possible.

If you have a problem that affects your work, your supervisor or your personnel office will try to help you or tell you where you can get help.

Equal Employment Opportunity

It is Government policy to base all personnel actions upon merit and fitness without discrimination because of race, color, religion, national origin, or sex. If you have a question or complaint involving discrimination for any of the above reasons, you are urged to discuss it with your Equal Employment Opportunity Counselor who will try to achieve an informal resolution at the local level. Should the matter not be resolved to your satisfaction by the Counselor, you may file a formal complaint with the Agency. The EEOC will direct you to the appropriate official authorized to receive complaints of discrimination.

The names and locations of Equal Employment Opportunity Counselors and Officers are posted on bulletin boards and are available in civil rights and urban affairs offices.

Grievances

EPA tries to insure that all employees are treated with consideration and fairness and that working conditions are good. However, it is impossible to operate an organization of so many employees and keep everyone satisfied. For this reason, procedures have been established whereby any employee who has a complaint has a right to present his complaint for consideration without fear of reprisal and with assurance of fair and impartial handling.

The Agency's procedures for the review of grievances are published in EPA Order 3110.7. Copies are available in EPA supply and distribution centers.

Grievance procedures provide for "informal" and "formal" consideration. If necessary an inquiry is made by an examiner

in the "formal" consideration. Labor organizations having exclusive recognition may negotiate grievance procedures in a written agreement with management for the units which they represent. Such grievance procedures are limited to complaints concerning the interpretation or application of the negotiated agreement. If you are in a unit of employees represented by a labor union, you may obtain a copy of a negotiated agreement from your personnel office or from the labor organization having exclusive recognition.

Appeals

If you are serving your probationary period, you have limited appeal rights; if you have completed your probationary period, in most instances you may appeal a specific official personnel action which adversely affects you, provided you do so within fifteen days after the action has been effected. Specific appeals procedures are provided for adverse actions, performance ratings, determinations of non-acceptable level of competence, position classification, and reduction-in-force. If you need advice in these matters, ask your personnel officer.

AWARDS

You are encouraged to think of ways to make Government operations more economical and efficient. Through the EPA Awards Program, you may be paid cash for a suggestion which improves the work of the Agency or the Federal Government. The amount of cash you receive if your idea is adopted depends on the overall savings or other benefit. Ask your personnel office about the submission of suggestions.

The Awards Program also provides cash awards for special achievements (sustained superior performance or special acts or services). There are other awards in the form of medals and certificates which recognize long, superior, or distinguished service. By good work you can become eligible for such recognition.

YOUR ADVANCEMENT

Your qualifications for promotion to a position of higher grade develop as your knowledge increases and as you grow in experience and competence. If you assume or are assigned

more responsibilities, you may be promoted in your own position. For example, you may have been assigned to your duties as a trainee. When you have demonstrated that you can perform your duties independently, your job may be reclassified at a higher grade and you may be promoted if you have met minimum qualification and time-in-grade requirements.

Many promotion possibilities involve selection for positions other than your own. It is EPA's policy to fill most vacant positions by promoting its own employees when this results in the selection of the best qualified person for the position. Selections are made according to the policies and procedures of the EPA Merit Promotion Program. The Plan indicates the positions covered, the method of locating candidates, and the method of evaluating qualifications of candidates. Your personnel office can provide you with information on the Merit Promotion Program.

Vacancy announcements are posted on bulletin boards. If you are interested in and think you may be qualified for a posted vacancy, you should apply for consideration.

When you are considered for promotion, your personnel record is reviewed—so do your part to keep it up-to-date. If you have training, education or experience that is not reflected in your record, ask your personnel office for appropriate forms for your use in including this information in your official personnel folder.

YOUR TRAINING OPPORTUNITIES

Employee training takes different forms. Whether or not you go to classes or conferences, your most important training is going on all the time—on the job itself. As you learn more about your work, you are advancing your knowledge, skills and abilities, and adding to your experience.

In EPA, depending on what you will be required to do in your position, you may be trained to improve a skill you already have, or you may be trained to do something you have never done before. You may get other training through manuals and other materials you are given to read.

There are other training opportunities to supplement the training and experiences you receive on the job. A wide variety of courses and seminars is available through the Civil Service Commission's Interagency Training Programs which draw

upon the expertise and facilities of many Government agencies to offer training that is especially pertinent to the work of Federal employees. Training opportunities are also afforded to some for study at universities and other non-Government facilities. If such study is related to your position or career plans, EPA as your employer can pay tuition and related costs under certain conditions. Your personnel office can explain the terms and conditions of such training.

YOUR PERFORMANCE EVALUATION

Your performance will be evaluated against performance requirements. If you do not know what the requirements are for your position, how much you are expected to do and what standards you must meet, ask your supervisor.

Once a year your performance will be rated formally. Three ratings are possible: satisfactory, outstanding, and unsatisfactory. If your overall performance meets the requirements of your position, you will be assigned a "Satisfactory" rating. This rating covers varying degrees of performance, including performance distinctly above average but not quite outstanding. If each aspect of your performance exceeds normal requirements and merits special commendation, you may receive an "Outstanding" rating. If you cannot meet the requirements of your position after a reasonable trial period and after efforts have been made to help you improve, your performance will be rated "Unsatisfactory" and it will be necessary to remove you from your position. To help you avoid such action, you are urged to inform yourself on what is expected, to do your best, and to talk over with your supervisor any problems or questions in the work situation.

In addition to formal performance ratings described above, other evaluations of your work will be made. These include appraisals of your performance under the EPA Merit Promotion Program and periodic determinations that your work meets an acceptable level of competence—a requirement that must be met to earn a within-grade increase in salary. An additional within-grade increase or quality increase, as it is called, may be awarded for performance which exceeds requirements over a substantial period of time.

REASSIGNMENT AND TRANSFER

An effort is made to place every employee in a position in which he can be useful and satisfied. However, the needs of the Agency may require that you be reassigned to a different position. Also, after you have been here a while you may think that another position would make better use of your abilities. It may be possible for you to be reassigned if there is a vacancy. If you think you could be even more useful in another position or line of work, discuss this with your supervisor. Even though your own organization has no suitable position for you there may be one elsewhere in the Agency. Ask your personnel office to look into the possibilities of a position for you in one of the other parts of EPA or, if you wish, in another part of the country.

You may accept an opportunity to transfer to another agency or department. You do not have to resign when you transfer to another Federal agency. Your personnel office handles the details of such a transfer. If you ever feel that you would like to leave the Agency, it may be helpful to talk with your supervisor. He may also ask you to discuss the matter with someone in the personnel office. A family or health problem may be making it difficult for you to work, or you may be dissatisfied with the type of work you are doing or with working conditions, or you may have an offer of an attractive position elsewhere—whatever the reason, the personnel staff will be interested in talking with you. They may be able to suggest some other solution which would make it possible for you to stay with EPA.

If you decide to leave, give your supervisor as much notice as possible before your departure, since he will need time to reassign your work to another individual.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION

This handbook has dealt in general terms with questions about personnel policies and rules. If you have any doubt about the way to do things, ask your supervisor. He is responsible for providing you with help and guidance as you adjust and progress.

When your supervisor cannot provide information for you, he may refer you to someone who specializes in personnel work. You may take your questions or problems to the per-

sonnel office directly and at any time. You need not take leave to talk with your personnel representative, but it is important to arrange with your supervisor a suitable time for such a visit.

If your facility does not have a personnel office, you may telephone or write your operating personnel officer to obtain assistance.